

The After-Fate of the Kingdom
437

maintained: here and there the baronial
insurgents,
the mobs of Palermo, the Latin
Christians of the
Sicilian communes had despoiled or
expelled the
Saracens; but as long as the royal
supremacy
maintained itself the older races of
Sicily had
little permanent harm to fear. The
blended art
and civilisation of the kingdom remain
under
Roger's two successors as splendid and
varied as
before; William II.'s cathedral of
Monreale, La
Cuba and La Zisa, summer palaces of
himself
and his father, show the same mingled
styles of
Arab, Greek, and Latin as do the
churches and
palaces of the first Hauteville king.

The death of the childless William II.
revealed
in their intensest form the many
dangers which
had always threatened the kingdom, in
uniting
with them the usual perils of a disputed
succession.
Tancred of Lecce, illegitimate son of
Duke Roger,
was crowned King (January, 1190) by a
patriotic
party led by Matthew of Ajello, who was
supported
by the bureaucracy and the gallant and
devoted
Margaritus. Tancred was a brave and
capable
man but he was advanced in age, a fact
which
counted for much in the difficult
position in
which he found himself. A second party
led by

Walter, Archbishop of Palermo, backed
by the
mass of the nobles, inclined to submit
to Henry,
now co-heir with Constance, in order
to avert
foreign invasion and civil war. The
Apulian
barons played their usual intransigent
part and,
though it could not be made a severe
reproach